



# The Guan-Kyerepon in the Suzerainty of the Asante, 1635-1750

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## Abstract

The Guan migrated from the old Wagadu Empire at the time of the Mandinka invasions and arrived in present-day Ghana in the 11th century, making settlements in the northern parts and along the confluence of the Volta Lake. The exodus of the Guans pursued three separate directions. The first group, which included the Kyerepon, settled in the northern part and along the confluence of the River Volta. The Guan and Kyerepon kins occupied the territories of Ghana until the first half of the 15th century when the Akan migrants of Bono waged war against them and established themselves. Between the 15th and 18th centuries, the immigrant nation-states consolidated the Guan chiefdoms and kingdoms through consanguinity, conquest, or alliances. These events resulted in the kingdoms of the Bono-Manso, Abron (Gyaman), Fanteland, Dankyira, Akwamu, Ga, Asante, and Akuapem. The research paper demonstrates the origins of the Guan-Kyerepon and their contributions to the Asante nation (1635-1750) through a historical study of primary and secondary materials comprising interviews, archival documents, books, and scholarly articles. The Asante migration exodus began in the 17th century from Asamankese, a town established by Guans and Aduana Akwamu, to Esiakwa, Esumenya, and Kwaaman. The founder of the organised state of Asante was the gift of a Guan god, Tutu (in Berekuso), and it was through the help of a Kyerepon priest, Ɔkɔmfɔ Anokye, that Kwaaman became an organised and exceptional nation and subsequently an empire. After 1701, when the Domaa, Dankyira, and Guan states (Kwabre, Sekyere, and Tafo) were annexed, Asanteman became an established state, with the institution of the Golden Stool, a symbol of national soul and consciousness. Through the prudent counsel of the Kyerepon priest, Asante became independent from its overlord, Dankyira, and covered more than 400km of territorial block by 1750. The celebration of Adaye, Odwira, and all laws governing the Asante nation-state are attributed to the Guan-Kyerepon, who became annexed and naturalised as Asante.

**Keywords:** Guan; Kyerepon; Asante; Osei Tutu; Ɔkɔmfɔ Anokye

## Introduction

The Guans inhabited the territory of Ghana in the 11<sup>th</sup> century, and for close to three centuries, they were the settlers until the Akan migrants, which include the

Asante, trooped in [1]. The Asante, the largest sub-Akan group in Ghana, has the Ashanti Region as its home, with a population of approximately five million, four hundred and forty thousand, representing 17.6% of the population [2]. The nation-state of Asante can be traced to the latter end

of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when eight chiefs established a union to struggle for their independence away from the Dankyira [3].<sup>1</sup> The nation-state of Asante became officially established and independent after the Feyiase Battle of 1699-1701, which saw the Dankyira people vanquished and the ascendancy of Asante as a burgeoning kingdom. The independence of Asante began with the defeat of the Domaa people, who lived in Suntreso, before liberating themselves from Dankyira at a cost<sup>2</sup>. The war that yielded the victory of Asante had eleven nation-states engaged, and it became the most decisive war in Asante's history<sup>3</sup>. After the defeat of Dankyira, the newly independent nation became so expansive, especially from 1701 to 1750, that the suzerainty of Asante extended almost the entire southern Ghana and most parts of northern Ghana—Gonja and Dagomba [4]. The expansiveness of Asante was witnessed under its first two Asantehene<sup>4</sup>. While Osei Tutu and his advisor, Okomfo Anokye, laid the foundation of Asante, Opoku Ware considered the acquisition of more territories for Asante. Scholars [1,5,6] have extensively explored the origin of the Asante, its wars, its suzerainty, and its social classes, yet little is known of the influence of the Guan-Kyerepon in the ascendancy and suzerainty of the significant and most influential Akan nation-state, Asante; hence, the need to explore and know more about these Guan-Kyerepon whose influence caused the rise and dominion of Asante as the most influential suzerain in West African history. In answering the question addressed in this paper, the research paper inquires into who these Guan-Kyerepon are and how they influenced the rise and suzerainty of the most potent pre-colonial Akan nation-state.

### Related Literature Review

The literature review shows that much has not been researched on the relationship between the Guan-Kyerepon and Asante, especially their contributions to the rise and suzerainty of Asanteman. However, there is no extensive literature that solely explores who the Guan-

Kyerepon people are and their contributions to the rise and establishment of the Asante nation-state from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Existing scholarly works on Asante do not profess the connection between Guan-Kyerepon and Asante or the Guan-Kyerepon influence on the ascendancy of the Asante nation-state. Hence, in writing this research paper, some significant scholarly works and texts were evaluated to offer some information and evidence for the corroboration of Guan-Kyerepon and Asante in the suzerainty of Asante (1635-1750). The review was significant in terms of its discussion of the identity of Asante and the Guan-Kyerepon contributions to the suzerainty of Asante.

### A Brief Note on the Guan-Kyerepon

The Guans are the first settlers whose migration began at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> century and inhabited Ghana in the early 11<sup>th</sup> century (i.e., 1020 AD) [7]. The Guans were traders and colonised northern Ghana, above the Black and White Volta confluence [8]. They are identified primarily as Gonja and inhabited modern Ghana from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries when the Akan undertook their exodus into Ghana [1]. Presently, the Guans make up about 4% of the Ghanaian population [9]. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Guan kingdoms were invaded by the Mandinka men and the Ga-Dangme migrations, with their complete crushing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, when Akan of Akwamu, Dankyira, and Asante consolidated them as provinces of their states [10]. The Kyerepon (Okere) also settled in the valleys of the White and Black Volta in present-day Northern and Upper Ghana in the 14<sup>th</sup> century before transmigrating to the Akuapem Hills through the Afram Plains in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Kyerepon migrants had Abotakyi as their capital, with 50 towns, and became vassals of the Akwamu kingdom from 1640-1731 [11]. Today, the Guan make up 3.7% of the Ghanaian population and can be found in almost all the regions of Ghana.

### A Brief Note on the Asante

The Asante people are found in an Ashanti Region with Kumasi as the regional capital. The region boasts a population of about 17%, and it has 47 constituencies [2,12]. The Asante are ruled by an Oyoko dynasty that emerged in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The Oyoko dynasty migrated from the ancient Akwamu kingdom and settled at Asiakwa before dispersing to secure permanent homes in the second half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. By the first year of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Asante represented the new military power of southern Ghana after crushing Dankyira, and by the end of the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Asante stretched from the most southern parts of modern Ghana to the entire northern Ghana under its first and second kings, Osei Tutu (1689-1717) and Opoku Ware (1720-1750) [13, 14].

1 A chief is defined as the head of a tribe or a clan. The established nations that formed modern-day Asante included Kwaman, Edweso, Mampon, Kumawu, Kaase, Asumegya, Dwaben, Nsuta, and Bekwai.

2 Some of these nation-states sacrificed themselves as offers to bring about the victory of Asante over Dankyira. The sacrifices included sacrificing three chiefs—Asenso Kufour, Adwumakasekese was buried alive; Dikopim I, Edwesohehene was butchered to death, Tweneboa Kodua, Kumawuhene was forbidden to shoot during his engagement in the Feyiase Battle and Boahen Anantuo, Mamponhene led as the General of the new union of Asante who died a week after the victory

3 These nation-states included Agona (Okomfo Anokye), Tafo (Kroboa), Edweso (Dikopim), Kumawu (Tweneboa Kodua), Ofeso (Wiafe Akenten), Nsuta (Oduro Panin), Kokofu (Agyeman Ampomfi), Bekwai (Kofi Dwaa Ayebofo), Asumegya (Onompau), Mampon (Adaakwa Yiadom), and Kwaaman (Osei Tutu I).

4 Osei Tutu (1701-1717) and Opoku Ware (1717-1750)

### Evidence Supporting the Arguments

Victor Selorme Gedzi examines the etymology and identity of Asante. His work focuses on clarifying the misunderstanding and miscommunication about Asante as an identity. Gedzi defines an Asante as a person whose maternal ancestress is Asante, is capable of speaking the Asante Twi dialect<sup>5</sup>, much more importantly, owes allegiance to Sika Dwa<sup>6</sup> and has a maternal extended family tracing its origin from a common ancestress. The people of Asante migrated from the north to first settle at Takyiman and were hunters [3].

In describing the etymology of the word, Asante Gedzi offers three theories. Accordingly, Gedzi opined that Osei Kwadwo, the Curator of the Manhyia Palace, explained that the name 'Asante' emerged from the unique commodity, red clay, which the vassal states (now Asante) served Dankyirahene with. While most tributaries of Dankyirahene ritually sent gold dust, fibres of plantains, and firewood, the would-be Asante additionally sent 'asan'<sup>7</sup> to Dankyirahene. Another account of the word is reported to be the result of the diverse small nation-states contagious to Kwaaman after the establishment of Kwaaman in 1630 who prepared for war against the tyrannical Dankyira rule in 1699-1701 when the legendary Okomfo Anokye gathered these states to form a more significant contingent against their warring enemies [3]<sup>8</sup>. The work of Victor S. Gedzi represents an attempt to contribute to the Asante literature due to the relative lack of documentation on the etymology of Asante. Although the work of Gedzi focuses on the clarification of possible misconceptions and miscommunications about Asante as an identity, which has significantly influenced the research paper, it did not examine the influence of Guan-Kyerepon in the rise of Asanteman, the focus of this research paper.

5 The word, dialect, is defined here as the language of a people derived from a dominant language. The dialect of the Asante is Asante Twi. Hence, Asante Twi has a common feature of vocabularies specific of the Asante people. For example, the Asante say, 'mese' to wit 'I say.'

6 The Golden Stool which serves as the embodiment of the souls of Asanteman and unites them. This stool was conjured through the mystical powers of Okomfo Anokye in the late 17th century which saw the establishment of Asanteman Union at Adum, Kumasi.

7 Asan is red clay in the language of Akan people.

8 This was the time Anokye gathered the various states contagious with Kwaaman and were vassals of Dankyira and commanded the Golden Stool which landed on the laps of the Kwaamanhene, Osei Tutu as a symbol of leadership of the new confederate state of Asante. With the conjuring of the Golden Stool, Anokye convinced the other chiefs to accept the Kwaamanhene as their new Omanhene and the Golden Stool as the symbolic unity of all the micro nation-states forming the new Union. The Union was formed specifically to fight Ntim Gyakari, Omanhene of Dankyira after his outrageous demands of these vassals; hence, the Union became 'Esa nti or Asa nti'—meaning those who formed the union because of a war.

Other significant writings on Asante history are Tom C. Mc Caskie, De-Valera N. Y. M. Botchway and Mary A. S. Owusu, Mariama Marciana Kuusaana, Kwasi Boaten, Akosua Perbi, Boniface I. Obichere, and Karen Sanders [15-21]. These scholarly works discuss Asante directly from the perspectives of various scholars. Unlike Tom C. Mc Caskie and Kwasi Boaten, who deal exclusively with the rise of Asante before 1701, Perbi, Obichere, Sanders, Botchway and Owusu, and Kuusaana discuss Asante after 1701.

Mc Caskie's work examines the complex and flexible connections between Dankyira and Asante. His work focuses on the rise of Asante between 1660 and 1720. During the reign of Ntim Gyakari, Dankyirahene (1694-1701), the northern vassals of Dankyira, led by Kwaamanhene, Osei Tutu, and his priest, Anokye, rallied these vassal states together to fight Dankyira after the increased demands of Dankyirahene of these tributaries [15]. The preparation for independence from the tyrannical rulership of Ntim Gyakari by Kwaaman and its allies began from June 1700 to May 1701. The preparation contemplates the purchase of more firearms than any goods. In November 1701, the Asante insurrectionary force had ultimately defeated Dankyira considerably due to the prohibition of supplying ammunition to Dankyira by its neighbours and the massive exodus of Dankyira royals and people to the aid of Kwaaman and its allies [15]. Although Mc Caskie's work significantly influences the discussion on the rise of the Asante nation-state as it details the events of the rise of Asanteman, it does not focus on the contributions of the Guan-Kyerepon to the suzerainty of Asanteman. Accordingly, the role of Guan-Kyerepon in the rise of Asanteman remains not the focus of McCaskie's work.

Kwasi Boaten also uncovers the origin of Kwaaman and its allies (the Asante), positing that the Asante traces its origin from Amansie/Adansi and professes that Adansi is the cradle of the Akan creation of kingdoms and kinship. In Mediaeval Akan history, Amansie remains the *primus inter pares* of the five principal states founded in the southern forest part of Ghana—Amansie, Akyem, Assin, Dankyira, and Asante in order of seniority [18]. The people of Asante moved from Amansie in about 1632, and it coincided with the rise of Dankyira after Amansie was submerged by Dankyirahene, Wirempe Ampem (1624-1637). The exodus is attributed to dynastic disputes, overpopulation and trade. As the Asante sojourned, they encountered the Guans, who lived in the environs of present-day Kumasi and subdued them [18].

The Guans were not powerful enough to resist the invasion of the emigrants from Amansie, as they rarely knew anything about firearms and their related ammunition. The Guan lands of Kwabre became inhabited by Amansie emigrants of Antoa, Bonwire, Kenyase, Wonoo, Faobaware, and Kumawu, among others. The principal objective of

Boaten was to trace the migration of Asante and their subsequent settlement in present-day Kumasi and its radius of 250km. It provides a significant benchmark and source for the research paper and offers the researcher a perspective of the Guans in Asante history; nevertheless, the work does not consider the history of these Guan and their role in the suzerainty of Asanteman.

Perbi, on the other hand, discusses mobility in pre-colonial Asante from a historical perspective by addressing the issue of the socio-political mobility of pre-colonial Asante enslaved people and people of servitude origin. Perbi argues that mobility remains a feature of comprehending the complexity of Asanteman and that social mobility is open [19]. Socio-political mobility served as a mechanism to integrate and unite the various 'aman'<sup>9</sup> that formed the Asante nation-state. Asante's succession to political office was not solely on the premise of birth but also on merits and achievements.

Perbi, in unriddling mobility in pre-colonial Asante, examines two hundred and twelve Asante stools and reveals there have been fifty-three scenarios where non-royals have ascended to the stools as chiefs. Out of these stools, as mentioned earlier, thirty-six royal stools had been occupied by non-royals due to the absence of mature members to ascend as chiefs [19]. The decision to appoint a successor depends on the authority and willingness of the Asantehene, Asantehemaa, and elders of the stool in question. Such non-royals who acted as chiefs did not have their stools blackened [19]<sup>10</sup>. Stools created for people in servile disposition in Asanteman included the Sepe Owusu Ansa, the Mmagyegyefuo Stool, and the Gyaasewa Stool<sup>11</sup>. Although

9 The Akan word for towns/people/chiefdoms.

10 Non-royal chiefs of a particular stool did not have their stools blackened because it is believed that, should such an occurrence happen, the 'true and real' ancestors of the Stool would not usually respond when they are called on sacred days via the pouring of libation. Examples of such stools once occupied by non-royals included Adum, Akyawkurom, Asaman, Asuboa, Bantama, Boaman, Dadiesoaba, Debooso, Dwaben, Edweso, Ekyi, Gyaakyi, Nkawie Kuma, Ofiri and Manso, Sekyeredomase.

11 The Sepe Owusu Ansa Stool was created after the Gyaman-Asante War of 1818-19 and belongs to the Ankobea Division. The Ankobea Stool was created after the Bono-Asante War of 1723-24 when Opoku Ware (1717-1750) defeated the Bono and Dagomba kingdoms. The Ankobeahene is mandated with the provision of the Asantehene's treasury while he is away or away on the battlefield and protects the kingdom while the Asantehene is away. The Sepe Owusu Ansa Stool is traditionally known as the Gyedu Stool, after Gyedu, a prominent citizen of Gyaman who was captured. It was created under Osei Tutu Kwame Assibey (1804-1824). The Mmagyegyefuo Stool was created by Osei Yaw Akoto (1824-1838) to be in-charge of the nannies at the Asantehene's court and responsible for caring for and training royal children. Gyaasewa Stool was initially created by Opoku Ware (1717-1750) for his son, Adusei Atwiniwa. However, under Osei Bonsu (Osei Tutu Kwame Assibey), the stool was offered to Opoku Frefre, a stool servant of Oyokohene for his faithfulness and long service in the palace. Opoku Frefre was placed in the Asantehene's treasury department for training and he was appointed

the scholarly work of Perbi focuses on the factors to consider in identifying an Asante and the factors of socio-political mobility in pre-colonial Asante, the work did not discuss anything concerning Guan-Kyerepon or their contributions to the rise of Asanteman, which is the focus of this paper.

Obichere's work examines the nature of slavery in the Asante and Dahomey kingdoms and cites Esreso, a settlement inhabited by followers of Amankwatia III, Bantamahene, and Kurontihene of Kumasi, as an example. Enslaved people in Asante formed the majority of the Gyaase Division and executed a significant function in the nation's politico-economic life [20]. Enslaved people acted as attendants and manservants to Asantehene and his Amanhene<sup>12</sup>. The work of Obichere focuses on the social character of slavery in Asante and Dahomey; hence, the work does not focus on the investigated issue, the identity of the Guan-Kyerepon or their contributions to the suzerainty of Asante.

Additionally, Karen Sanders' work focuses on trade sustainability in pre-colonial Asante. Sanders' evaluation of the sustainability of trade in pre-colonial Asante traces the migratory journey of Asante, the factors for the dominance of the Asante kingdom over most parts of modern Ghana from 1701-1873 and how Asante influenced Western African history by manipulating trade patterns. To Sanders, trade formed a historical force that explained the dominance and incorporation of certain ethnic groups into Asanteman. The economic might of Asante helped the kingdom expand into an empire and build trade networks, resulting in its increased reputation. The economic viability of Asante hedged it from hostile invasion and encouraged such powers to trade with the Asante, resulting in the stabilisation of the Asante kingdom and the entrenchment of its civilisation [21]. Despite the focus of Karen Sander's work being the role of trade sustainability in the stability of Asanteman, it significantly influenced the perspective of the researcher to appreciate the modus operandi the Asante employed to expand its power and influence over its sphere of influence. The writing of Sanders was influential in better comprehending the factors for the significant influence of Asante in the history of West Africa, despite its lack of consideration of the origin or identity of the Guan-Kyerepon and their contributions to the rise of Asante.

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as the Gyaasewahene (Head of the Exchequer) from 1820-26, becoming the highest political officer in the Asante financial administration. Under him, where the Sanaahene (State Treasurer), afotosanfo (Cashiers), towgyefo and nsumgyefo (Collectors of tributes and taxes) and the Batafo (traders). The Gyaasewa Stool is also known as the Obuabasa Stool named after Adu Bofu's appellation and it became a special stool vested in perpetuity in the sons of Opoku Frefre.

12 Amanhene refers to paramount chiefs of the various city-states that report to Asantehene, the overlord of the Asante kingdom.

Kuusaana, in her work, re-assesses the Europeans' perceptions concerning the Asante nation-state in the colonial period by focusing on the rationale for the descriptions and prejudices of the colonialists about Asante. Kuusaana argues that ethnic tensions are ripe on the African continent and attributes this phenomenon to internal factors, the demarcation of boundaries by separating homogenous ethnicities, and the policies and attitudes adopted by the European colonisers [17]. The colonialists and their apparatchiks perceived the Asante as being haughty and aggressive due to the colonial antecedents of the era [17].

Kuusaana recounts the initial contacts established between the Asante and Europeans as a result of commerce. Asante was seen as a hindrance to British colonial and economic interests in the early days of contact, but relations between Asante and Britain improved after the Sagrenti War of 1874. The work of

Kuusaana details the consequences of the 1874 Asante defeat, such as the establishment of schools and the exile of Asantehene and some of his courtiers. To Kuusaana, to understand the prejudices about the Asante, the role of the numerous wars between 1806 and 1900 is essential, yet the involvement of the Asante in several wars is no standard to support a negative perception of the Asante [17]. While this scholarly work speaks about the Asante, especially after 1750, it does not address how the Guan-Kyerepon contributed to the suzerainty of the Asante.

Botchway and Owusu examined ethnic interactions between Asante and some 'ethnies' from the 17th to 19th centuries, arguing that the period from 1501 through 1874 remains a time of consolidation and the art of nation-building for most of the state that currently makes up 'present-day' Ghana. Botchway and Owusu further argue that alliances of some ethnic groups—Akyem, Ewe, Fante, Ga-Dangme, and the Gonja-Dagomba—were for the containment of Asante, hence a policy of inter-ethnic and inter-nation-state alliances [16]. The period under review saw political instability as the norm of the day. Such interactions were informed based on trade, war, and the need for security to maintain a national balance of power [16].

Exogamy, according to Botchway and Owusu, served as a promoter of inter-group alliances and aided in reinforcing the social structures of social networks [16]. Alliance systems were necessitated by political, socio-cultural, and economic reasons hinged on the need for 'survival of people-hood and 'inter-national' balance of power [17]. Diplomatic alliances have historically resulted in the rise of the early kingdoms in pre-colonial Akan, such as Adansi, Akwamu, Dankyira, and later, Asante, as a *modus operandi* to eliminate the threat of being extinct and replacing threatening power [17].

In their work, Botchway and Owusu argue that most inter-state alliances in pre-colonial Ghana aimed at dissolving Asante and its suzerainty alliance of an empire, especially after the 1740s, when Asante hegemony reached the Gonja and Dagomba kingdoms. Numerous wars against Asante were primarily economic—i.e., the need to participate in the Trans-Atlantic Trade or safeguard one's interest in the coastal trade. The work of Botchway and Owusu depicts how powerful Asante was before its colonisation by the British, yet it does not speak to the issue of Guan-Kyerepon's role in becoming a sovereign kingdom and subsequently an empire by the first half of the 18th century, the focus of the paper.

## Materials and Methods

The paper used a historical research design—a qualitative approach. This design was appropriately selected because the research paper aimed at understanding who the Guan-Kyerepon are and how they significantly contributed to the establishment and Asante's suzerain. The design is appropriate to understand the investigated topic as it helps to grasp a better purview of Asante's history and the nature of influence [22,23]. Thus, both primary and secondary sources were relied upon to offer information or evidence on the influence of the Guan-Kyerepon, who feature less in the narration of Asante history. Primary sources included interviews, documents from European sources, court judgements and the Public Records and Archives Department (PRAAD). The paper relied on archival materials from PRAAD and the online archives of the Internet Archives. Secondary sources included scholarly works and texts, academic articles, and books that informed the debate on the Guan-Kyerepon in the Asante suzerainty.

## Discussion

The Guan represents the first ethnies to have inhabited modern-day Ghana and settled in various places [11]. The Guan migrated from the Wagadu Empire and initially inhabited the northern parts of present-day Ghana with settlements at Buipe and the modern-day Gonja, Talensi, Kete-Krakyi, and most parts of southern Ghana with low population density [1,24,25]. Around the 11th century, the Muslim Almoravids evaded the Wagadu Empire, forcing the migration of the Guans in search of a new settlement. The Guans are the forebears of the Akan aristocrats and merged with other ethnies after the 11th century—the period of Akan migration from the Djenne-Timbuktu district [1]. Currently, the Guan ethnies can be found in Ghana, Togo, and Benin. In Ghana, they include Atwima, Akpafu, Lolobi, Nkonya, Santrokofi, Likpe, Buem, Anum, Boso, Nyagbo, Tafo, Akposo, Logba, Akpafo, Abanu, Okere-Kyerepon, Buem, and Nchumuru (the first migrants), whose leader was Atara

Firaw [26,27]. Some of the first migrants of the Guan moved towards the lower basin of the Volta River. They included the Okere (Kyerepon), Tafo, Senya, Larte, Kpeshi of Ga, and the Obutu (Awutu people), with the third group of migrants moving farther into the western and central parts of Ghana, and they are the Ahanta, Aowin, Asebu, Eguafu, Etsii, Nzema, Sefwi, Shama, and Nzema [8,10,28].

While the exact date for the migration is uncertain, Adu Boahen speculates on 1010 to 1076 as the period [10]. The Guan dispersal from the Wagadu Empire resulted in its first state of Kong, now in Ivory Coast, then Gonja, and subsequently Bono-Manso [1]. The Guan people founded states in the regions of Dagomba, Gurma, Mamprusi, and Mossi (Burkina Faso) and are the originators of the Akan clans today [1]. However, in the 12th century, the Guans infiltrated into the forest region and coastal plains of modern-day Ghana and established the kingdoms and towns of Anomabu, Anum, Asebu, Banda, Egya, Kormantsi and Moree [24]. The Guan kingdom had several towns and stretched to the coast [1]. The Guan lived along the left bank of the Black Volta, such that they lived between the Moshi-Dagomba and Asante [25].

Nonetheless, by the first half of the 13th century, the nation-states of the Guan in Gurma and Mamprusi had been sacked by the Bozamfari from Northern Nigeria, while by 1340, the Guan state in the region of Dagomba had also been swept [1]. With the sweeping of their nation-states by the Bozamfari, the Guan refugees peregrinated and established the Bono Kingdom at Bono-Manso and several other states between the Bono-Manso and the Volta River [1]. Between 1340 and 1450, the Guans' colonisation resulted in the founding of the towns of Ejumaku near Mankessim, Efutu, Edina (Elmina), Komenda, Oguaa, Shamaa-Amanfoso, and Sunkwaa [1]. The Kyerepon originated from the Kania state in Gonja and colonised the lands on today's Akuapem Hills and the entire Accra Plains, as well as founding a town in the region of Nsawam in 1515, with the other migrants of the Guan stock settling in great numbers at various points in the eastern Gold Coast, such as Tumpa (Winneba). Therefore, at the time of the arrival of the Europeans on the coast of Ghana, the indigenes who interacted with the Europeans were Guan on the entire stretch of the Guinea coast [29].

The Guan controlled most parts of present-day Ghana until the 15th century, when the Akan, Gas, Mole-Dagbani, and Ewes began migrating into the country [11, 30]. The southern block of the Guan reached the coast not later than 1200 AD, before the Fante in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and Accra in the 16<sup>th</sup> century [27]. The Guans are known initially as the Ntafo [25]. Today, the Guans can be found in the ethnies of the Akan, Ga, and Ewe. The migration of the immigrants began with the Akan in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, such that between the 15th and 18th centuries, the Akan, Gas, Ewes, and Mole-

Dagbani had moved in all directions, usually in small clans and tribal classes [10]. These immigrants' sojourns were fundamentally political, with the late-17<sup>th</sup> and early-18<sup>th</sup> centuries as periods of significant and enduring sojourning of present-day ethnies, especially the Akan; thus, by the end of the first half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Akan colonisation seems to have been reticent. The Akan mainly migrated to districts where the Guans had been moderately populated; hence, it was easier to swallow the Guans into the various city-states, kingdoms and empires of the Akan subsequently [10].

Hence, by 1500 AD, state formations had already emerged in the northern savannah regions, the coastal areas, and the hills by the Guans [10]. The records of the Portuguese of the 15th century indicate we know nothing of what trade there may be in this country but only what it is densely populated" [31]. The Guans specialised in fishing, salt production, pottery, and weaving until the Akan (Bono) displaced them from the Bono-Manso into the savanna regions; Ga-Dangme displaced the Kyerepon, and they moved to join other Guans on the Akuapem and Krobo Hills [27]<sup>13</sup>; and by 1690-1697, the Amansie migrants ousted the Guans under Atara Ofiram VIII to establish the current Asanteman [10,32].

The Guan and Akan began to trade among themselves dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century (1470-1500) such that by the 1600s, the major products traded were fish, salt, and pottery products for gold, ivory, and iron [10] (Boahen 1992, 405). The trade link was furthered from 1500 to 1800. With the displacement of the Guan-Kyerepon on the coast in the 16th century, trade between eastern Akan (Denkyira, Akwamu, Akyem, and Asante) increased, especially from 1650 to 1800 [10]. The Akan began to export enslaved people and became excessively integral, such that slave exports soared in 1710. Slave trade exceeded the exports of gold in 1750, with the Akan states having exported 474,000 enslaved people [33].

With the introduction of firearms and ammunition on the Gold Coast around the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the Akan nation-

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13 The Kyerepon people inhabit the northern part of Akuapem State and speak a dialect of the Guan but distinct from the pure Guan language. The Kyerepon are the first to have settled in the Akuapem Hills and inhabited the locality for centuries before the Osudoku people arrived and then the Krobos subsequently. The Guan-Kyerepon lived independently of each family or chiefdom but were bound together by ties of common language. The Guan-Kyerepon are the first wave of the Akan migration in the Gonja country at about 1200 AD. Presently, the Kyerepon people are established in six principalities within the Akuapem State: Apirede, Abonse, Awukugua, Dewu, Abiriw and Adukrom in order of seniority and first settlement with Apiredehene as the land owner. The Awukugua people lived on the coastal plains of Accra before the arrival of the Ga-Dangme in the first half of the 16th century. The Awukugua people vacated the Accra coastal plains around 1531 and made homes at Abotoase in 1620 when Akwamu established its capital at Nyanawoase.

states began to import an annual quantity of 180,000 guns, increasing the number of war captives (enslaved people) [34]. The majority of these enslaved people were from the defeated Guan ethnies, owing to the high incidences of war among the Akan and Guan people, resulting in increased wealth among the Akan. Aside from actively being involved with the Akan in terms of trade, the Guan were actively trading with the northern kingdoms of the Songhay-Mali Empire.

After three centuries, the Guan ethnies began to face opposition from invaders, especially the Akan, in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, when the Bono established its capital on the Bono-Manso. By 1550, the Akan ethnies began to settle permanently, with a large number of small communities and city-states emerging—Fomena, Akrokyere, Kwahu, Akyem Abuakwa, Akyem Kotoku (Amansie), Akwamu, Wassa Twifo, Adom, Tafo, Suntreso, Kaase, and Amakom [10]. The formation of the Akan states further accelerated between 1530 and 1630, such that according to the Dutch map, in 1629, out of 43 nation-states, less than one-third were of Guan ancestry purely [10,35]. The chiefdoms, as mentioned earlier of the Akan were established with the inclusion of Guan, such that, by 1629, most kingdoms on the Gold Coast encompassed Guans as demesnes [10, 24].<sup>14</sup>

With the Guans as demesnes of Dankyira, the kingdom expanded so that the Dankyira kingdom pioneered the centralisation and militarisation of empires. The pre-Asante states near Assin, Aowin, Kumasi, Sehwi, Twifo, Wassa, the coastal kingdoms of Adom and Fetu, and parts of Ivory Coast were all occupied by the Guans and became part of Dankyira [10]. As the Guan and Aduana Akwamu merged to create Asamankese Town, their power expanded, resulting in the creation of a new capital at Nyanowoase. These two towns remained in communication with each other. The mighty might of Akwamu yielded in its sacking of Kyerepon in 1640, Ga state in 1681, Agona in 1689, Adangbe states to the east, Kwahu, Peki, Ho, and Kpandu (1702-1710) [10,11].

The Guans founded the Asante district before the coming of the Amansie district [25]. The Akan migrants came to

Ghana following the Bantu invasion. It is evident in the Akan language, as it shows traces of Bantu influence [25]. Such migration began at the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century [1, 25]. The ancestors of the Asante migrated from the Asamankese area in the Akwamu kingdom and settled at Betenaase (now Esiakwa) in the Kyebi district [36]. During their migration from Akwamu, the Asante migrants were led by an Oyoko royal, Ankyewa Nyame, who led them in the 16<sup>th</sup> century from the Akwamu kingdom to Asiakwa and to Manso Abodom, a principal of Dankyira [36]. The apical ancestress, Ankyewa Nyame, came with Akyampon Tenten, Twum, and Krobea Amanfi. Ankyewa Nyame had a daughter, Birempomaa Piesie, who had decuplets. These decuplets formed the families that came to be Asante [37]. The decuplets comprised two Ayoko (Kokofu and Nsuta), one Dako, and seven adopted. These seven families lived at Adansi Ahensan, where the Ayoko and Dako<sup>15</sup> people came to meet [36]. The families were Bretuo, Agona, Asona, Aduana, Asakyiri, Ekuona, and Asenie. These families at Adansi Ahensan were vassals of the Dankyira kingdom [36].

The immigrants from Akwamu moved to Asantemanso, a land colonised by an Aduana family, and lived there for a while. The Ayoko migrants at Asantemanso met Oyoko Abohen (made of Asaman, the chief of all Ayoko; Kenyasi and Mamponten), Oyoko Atutuo (made of Adenchimanso, Pampaso, Ayuomu, and Ahenkuro) and Oyoko Breman, with Fabawali as the chief and Silesu as the second [37]. The Dwaben, another Oyoko migrant, followed after the Kokofu and Nsuta migrants settled at Asantemanso. After Ankyewa Nyame came Akyampon Tenten and Twum, who were the *mmusua panyin*<sup>16</sup> of their families. The Akwamu-Ayoko migrants began their colonisation of territories during the time of Kobia Amanfi in 1570, who settled at Kokofu while his peers, Dwaben and Nsuta, moved farther inward to the north. The Dwaben kinsfolk migrated to Agyapo, while the Nsuta kins migrated to Agyama. However, due to conflicts between Nsuta and Dwaben, the Nsuta kins abandoned Agyama and moved towards Esreso, then subsequently to Abooso Akanee (modern-day Kwaaman) [36]. The Ayoko also founded Nkoransa and Antoa [37].

The migration of Krobea Amanfi from Esumenya Asantemanso to Kokofu and the dispersal of other Ayoko migrants to present-day Kumasi began in 1635. After the demise of Krobea Amanfi, the first chief of the Ayoko migrants occupying the Aban Dwa Stool, Oti Akenten succeeded and began an expansionary policy by waging wars against neighbouring chiefdoms [38]. Oti Akenten swept

14 Kingdoms that had Guans as a subdomain included Akwamu, Dankyira, Ga, Fante, Wassa and Adom. For example, the Guans merged with the Ga establishing an important market centre at Abonse with lands of Obutu and Senya as part of the Ga kingdom. The Anum and Aduana Akwamu established a strong kingdom stretching from modern-day Asamankese, Kade, Nsawam and Akuapem; Dankyira was established by the Agona people and Guans on the coast, and the Fante extended its territory inland by suppressing the Etsi. The Gyaaman (Abron) kingdom was established by Aduana royals and Guan principalities of Fantara, Gbin, Kulango, Nafana and Nkoran. The Guan principalities of Dankyira and the Adansi migrants founded states of Afigyaase, Bekwai, Dwaben, Kokofu, Kwaaman, Mampon and Nsuta all within a 50km radius of present Kumasi, a domain previously populated by the people of Kwaabre and Sekyere (Guans).

15 The word, Dako means the Ayoko people that moved further from Asantemanso due to the nature of the land. They include Ayigya, Adako-Jachie, Nsuta, Ntonso, Asaman, Kuntanase and Dikoman.

16 *Mmusua panyin* means heads of the family.

through the chieftdom of Domaa under Koli Batafo from their southern settlement at Ohwim, 8km north of modern Kumasi and founded a small city-state, Kwaaman, the subsequent cardinal town of Asanteman [38]. Obiri Yeboa succeeded Oti Akenten (1635-1660) and continued his policy of expansion against the Domaa. The war enterprise against the Domaa attracted many of the Amansie city-states to migrate up north and founded the chieftdoms of Dwaben, Kumawu, Mampon, and Nsuta, which later formed part of the nuclei of the new kingdom, Asanteman, and survived to date [38]. It was Oti Akenten who laid down the foundation for the future development of Asante. It was during his reign that Asante became a military chieftdom, extending far and wide from Asantemanso and other centres, sweeping through neighbouring mishpocha in an attempt to provide themselves with homelands [25].

Away from Amansie, the new immigrants changed their inheritance system to matrilineal, a practice among the Guans due to the looseness of scruples common among women [38]. Claridge further argues that, according to the Asante, the matrilineal system was essential for the ease of selecting a successor to the stool should a reigning chief be killed in a battle and the stool ascended to his son, along with ensued issues of regency, whereas having a succession through a brother or nephew, the risk is minimal [39].

The next chief of the Akwamu-Ayoko migrants was Obiri Yeboa, who had a sister, Manu Kotosie, who was childless. She searched for a child without answers until the news of the far-famed Guan god, Tutu, reached the Kwaamanhene, who sent his sister to Akwamu, hoping to obtain from Tutu a charm to have her conceive [25]. At Akwamu, Manu Kotosie married a nephew of Ansa Sasraku, Kwadwo Owusu, and visited the Tutu god (in Berekusio) to assist her in becoming a 'real' mother, and the request was granted [24]. Manu Kotosie did receive the request and conceived a son, whom, in gratitude, she christened after the god Tutu [36]. The son was called Osei Kofi Tutu, the would-be Asantehene and founder of the Asante kingdom [24, 25].

Obiri Yeboa (1660-1688) passed away and was succeeded by Osei Tutu. Before the ascension of the Kwaaman stool—Aban Dwa—a committee was empanelled to find a suitor to ascend the Kwaamanhene stool. A courier was dispatched to the kins of Obiri Yeboa at Asaman to find a successor, but the kinsfolk sent feedback stating they could not offer a successor to ascend to the calamitous acme title. An ambassador was again dispatched to Kokofu to summon Gamby to ascend the stool, but he refused and preferred to engage in his blacksmithing work. Ohene Fredua, Kenyaasehene, became the next person to be offered the stool. Fredua offered a condition to ascend to the stool of Kwaamanhene—his debts of 100 pereguans (£800) should be recovered. The request

was turned down [37].

Sakodeɛ Datɛ, Antoahene, was next to be offered the Aban Dwa Stool, but he declined and proposed that Osei Tutu, the child of Manu Kotosie at Akwamu, should be crowned Kwaamanhene, and the proposal was carried out. The chief of Ahensan dispatched ambassadors from the Oyoko family in Kwaaman to Akwamu to inform Osei Tutu to take the title of his late uncle, which he agreed to [37]. Osei Kofi Tutu informed the Akwamuhene, Ansa Sasraku III, who agreed and gave him men to aid and a bead, Abɔɔm,<sup>17</sup> and money [37]. The Akwamu men were led by Anum Asamoa, Anumhene, who then resided at Nsawam. The dispatched men of Anum numbered 700 armed men, and these people became the Adum in Kumasi [5, 24].

On his way from Akwamu to Kwaaman, Osei Tutu became infected with smallpox, and Kwame Frempon Anokye—Ɔkɔmfo Anokye (a Guan from Kyerepon—Awukugua) instructed that a hut be made for Osei Tutu till he recovered and ordered that esam<sup>18</sup> be fed him. Once Osei Tutu recovered, Anokye struck the head of a man with esam, named him Dossam<sup>19</sup>, and told him that he would find men and he would be their head [37]. In the village where the hut was made for Osei Tutu, Anokye named Asare, and the only job they do is make esam. Oral tradition posits that while sojourning from Akwamu, Osei Tutu fashioned for himself a crown made from an elephant's skin [36]. This crown became the ahenkyɛw (crown)—Denkyemkyɛ—of Asante and was worn by each occupant during enstoolment. The crown is further worn when addressing chieftains on the verge of warfare, imposing upon these chieftains, by an oath, the obligation of vanquishing the enemy or of sacrificing their lives [38].

Oral tradition states that when Osei Tutu arrived at Kwaaman, there was tumultuous joy, and he was unanimously crowned Kwaamanhene in 1690. Upon his arrival to Kwaaman, Osei Tutu had no man to celebrate the death of his uncle, Obiri Yeboa; thus, he took Amankwatia (an Agona) royal and applied mud on him and informed him of the need to sacrifice him to celebrate the death of his predecessor [36,37]. Amankwatia, a childhood friend of Osei Tutu, answered him, saying: He alone is insufficient, so he should be given soldiers to fight and capture 60-100 men, whom Osei Tutu will kill to celebrate the day. It was agreed upon, and Amankwatia heralded the escorts of Anum. Amankwatia and his contingents fought with the seven Guan nation-states of Sepe and swept them, taking some as captives; he fought

17 The Abɔɔm bead is also known as Twumasadie. It is a precious bead used by royals.

18 Powdered corn.

19 After the powdered corn.



with Twumdroassi (another Guan), crushed them, and took some prisoners. Amankwatia also fought with the Pankrono indigenes (another Guan kinsfolk), overcame them, and took some captives. Altogether, Amankwatia took 100 Guan captives and gave them to Osei Tutu for sacrifices, which he received with thanks and spared Amankwatia's life [37].

With the burial of Obiri Yeboa and the ascension of Osei Tutu as the fourth Kwaamanhene, he embarked on an act of revenge on the Domaa. Kwaaman and its confederate states prepared for three years and were able to defeat the Aduana Domaa with the help of Ɔkɔmfɔ Anokye. Ɔkɔmfɔ Anokye monished Osei Tutu to make Amankwatia an Osahene,<sup>20</sup> and to name him, Ekunti (corrupted as Kronti), and further created six more generals under him, and established a large town named Bantama and gave it to those lieutenant-generals to dwell in [19,37].<sup>21</sup>

Events leading to the defeat of Domaa unfolded as Bekwai, Nsuta, Kokofu, Dwaben, and Kuntanase, all ruled by Ayoko chieftains, were convinced to join forces with Osei Tutu—that is, common ties of blood. With the Ayoko clan united, the next task was to persuade the other chiefdoms near Kwaaman to join the military force—Ofeso (Bretuo), Edweso (Asenie), and Amakom (Asenie) [5]. With these chieftains convinced and having joined the confederate, Anokye met the independent chieftains at Amoako and offered them a potion called ngyegyewa (palm wine drink mixed with 'medicine'), and the new confederate state under the leadership of Kwaamanhene, Osei Tutu, defeated Kyereme Sikafo, the Domaahene at Toperemanunkwanta (present-day in the area of the Officers Mess at Kumasi) [5].

After crushing Domaa in 1693, some of the remnants of Domaa migrated from Suntreso and founded Gyaman, Odumasi, Berekum, Abessim, and several towns [38]. Anokye admonished Osei Tutu that Kyereme Sikafo should not be offered the coup de grace but made the ɔkrasodwareni (soul washer) of Osei Tutu and presented Sikafo with dwinie (gold plate) as his crest for the office to hang around his neck by pineapple fibre and a stool made for him [5]. All the stools of the chieftains of the Kwaaman confederacy were buried, and Anokye made new stools after the 1693 Dormaa-Asante War. It was to obliterate the disgrace of Obiri Yeboa's quietus [38].

With the resistant enemy of Kwaaman removed, Osei Tutu embarked on further expansion and crushed the people of Amakom, aborigines, during the reign of Akosa. Osei Tutu appointed Edu Panyin and gave his niece in marriage to him, who birthed Opoku Ware, the next Asantehene [38].

20 A General.

21 The lieutenants under Bantamahene are Asuowinhene, Afarihene, Akwaboahene, Twaafuo Baah, Kurawumahene and Amakye Barihene.

Next, the indigenes of Tafo<sup>22</sup>, the aborigines of Kwaaman (Guan), under Ɔsafo Akotong, were attacked in 1695. The Tafo people controlled present-day Kumasi to Beposo near Lake Bosomtwe [40]. After crushing Amakom's Akosa, Akotong, Tafohene instructed his horn-blowers to proclaim, "Osei Tutu, sɔre hɔ o twam! To wit, "Get away from the place, you, Osei Tutu!" It was because the Kwaaman migrants were taking undue advantage of the territory and fishing in the Subin, a strictly forbidden act [24]. It infuriated Osei Tutu, resulting in a declaration of war on the Tafo indigenes and crushing them, coopting them into the Confederate nation-state [25,37,38].

With the Tafo as a principality of Kwaaman now, Osei Tutu fell ill and was on the verge of dying when Anokye monished him to mollify Ɔsafo Akotong for the injuries done to him and his chiefdom. Tafohene agreed to be appeased on the condition that Osei Tutu avowed upon an oath that he would never kill any of his kinsmen, to which Osei Tutu agreed [24]. The oath was administered to Akotong's sister, Nyarko Kusiamoa; thus, by this oath, nobody in the land of Akyenakurom had ever since been subjected to the Asantehene's executioner's blade. This done, Osei Tutu regained his health and subsequently forbade the fishing and eating of fish from the Subin but instead fed the Subin with the corpses of slain criminals [24]. Kwaaman's final campaign was the destruction of Ofeso under Wiafe Akenten. This defeat saw the entire district formerly belonging to Domaa, Tafo, Amakom, Atwima, Kwabre, and others became the property and homeland of Osei Tutu and his Ayoko kins [24].

With the defeat of Tafo, the Ayoko and their allies waged war on another powerful Guan kingdom under Nana Ofinam Atele Frimpon<sup>23</sup>, which resulted in the annexation of Agogo, Kumawu, Ofeso, and Mampon, ending the military expansionary campaign [25]. As the councillor of Osei Tutu, Anokye Frempon admonished that all tributaries under Kwaaman be provided full rights as citizens of the Ayoko clan and have no interference at the hands of the victors [38]. Ɔkɔmfɔ Anokye then monished Osei Tutu to enforce a national law strictly observed by all his successors on pain of death—the nationalisation of all vassals and provinces with all citizens rights and that whoever dares reveal the ancestry or origin of a people to his children was certain to be punished by death, and neither were such conquered states to state themselves where they had migrated from [24].

22 Tafo was a principal trading centre along the trade routes of linking Begho (Nsoko) with the coast, through Amansie and Assin. Tafo is referred as Nta/Inta on the 1629 Dutch Map. Today, Tafo is three miles away from Kumasi.

23 Atara Ofinam VII reigned in Kwahu from along the Afram Plains and Volta River down to Anum and Boso by the Senchi crossing on the Volta.

With the campaign over, the Kyerepon priest, Anokye, provided a common stool for all members of the new nation-state by cutting three kumnini trees and planting them at Kwaaman, Dwaben, and Kumawu [25]. The kumnini survived in Kwaaman, an indication that Osei Tutu, Kwaamanehene, had been elected by the gods to be the permanent head of the newly formed state, Asante. Thus, in 1695, Kwaaman became Kumasi—i.e., under the kumnini tree—and the foundation of Asanteman began. As the Asante consolidated themselves in their new homeland from 1635-1698, Anokye, on one Friday, gathered all independent chiefdoms at Pampaso and conjured a stool adorned with gold from the heavens, which floated to the earth and gently rested on the knees of Osei Tutu [25].

With the revelation of the Golden Stool, Anokye proclaimed that the stool contains the spirit of the whole nation; all of its might and bravery depended on the safeguarding of the stool. To emphasise the severity of this, Osei Tutu and every prominent chief and Queenmothers present were to offer Anokye a clipping from their nails, a hair apiece [25]. The hairs and nails were crushed into a paste with 'charm' and smeared on the Golden Stool, and the remaining drunk by the contributors as a sacramental drink—i.e., the gesture implied that each spirit of the contributors was provided with quietus or anchorage on the Golden Stool and impressed on the national consciousness of Asanteman [25]. The Golden Stool transformed the confederate Kwaaman state into an organised state, with Asantehene as its *primus inter pares* and provided laws for the new permanent state [38].

The Kyerepon priest now in Asante instituted a diplomatic rule of incorporating conquered territorial divisions into the Asante State, giving their chieftains representations on the Great Council of the State, and providing freedom as much as feasible in the handling of their internal affairs [25]. With Asante established and a potential power to reckon with, they began to find ways to throw off the Dankyira yoke. Before the Feyiase Battle, which resulted in the independence of Asante, Esumenya, Dwaben, Kwaaman, Mampon, and Ofeso were nation-states with larger populations and great importance, while Kokofu, Bekwai, and Nsuta were comparatively unimportant [5].

Between 1699 and 1701, the Asante and Dankyira embarked on several battles. The initial factor in the Dankyira-Asante war is attributed to Oduro Apinsemuo, the man who offered a poisoned drink to Dankyirahene, Boa Amponsem, and caused his death. Oduro Apinsemuo fled to Kwaaman [37]. The next factor was fuelled by Bosiante, the Dankyirahene, who entangled himself with one of Osei Tutu's wives. Bosiante tried to pacify Osei Tutu with gold and everything possible, but the latter rejected all mollifiers

and swore to wash the insult in blood [41]. Amid the warfare preparation period, Bosiante (1694-1697) died and was succeeded by Ntim Gyakari, who sought to renew the peace proposals, but Osei Tutu contumeliously rejected the olive branch and argued that the insult offered by Bosiante was a personal one and it would not be asseverated that he has any score to settle with Dankyira as a nation; thus, the Dankyira did not have any preparations for the war [41]. The next factor that broke the camel's back was the demands of Ntim Gyakari of the Asante State. The demands were to serve as punishment for offering a refugee to Oduro Apinsemuo, a man who offered poison to Boa Amponsem. The demands were that each chieftain in Asante should offer their most cherished and loved wives, send one of their most loved sons, and fill the copper pan of his servants with gold dust and bangles of beads called Kyikyiri Konna (the most valued bead) [37].

This gesture infuriated the chiefs of the various nations, such that Adaakwa Yiadom, Dwabenhene, led them to fill the pan with stones, killed the sword bearer, and sent the herald messenger to inform Ntim Gyakari that they would not grant him his wish, so he better come to fight them. To fight Dankyira, Okomfo Anokye admonished Osei Tutu to make Boahen Anantuo, the first Mamponhene, the commander of the Asante army, Akorsa Yiadom to pay £240 to be made Adontenhene, and Adaakwa Yiadom as the head in command of Oyoko and Dako wing [37]. Asenso Panin of Adwumakaase was made to take the place of Osei Tutu, as Anokye foresaw the death of Osei Tutu should he embark on the Dankyira war. While Asante made preparations, many indigenes of Dankyira began migrating to the new state, Asante, founding the territorial divisions of Nkawie and Tapa, among others. The Dankyira invaded Adunku, a village where they stayed for the night, but captured a prisoner, subsequently identified as Adunkuhene, who was inspecting his traps. The seizure of Adunkuhene gave the alarm, and the Adunku men rescued their chieftain and resisted the Dankyira forces, forcing them to move about 12.8km to the village of Feyiase, the ground where the decisive battle of independence ensued [25].

At Feyiase, one of the most significant commanders of Dankyira abandoned his post, and the line became penetrable for the Asante, leading to the capture of Ntim Gyakari by Adaakwa Yiadom, Dwabenhene. With the defeat of Dankyira at Feyiase in May 1701, the Asante plundered Dankyira's capital, Abankeseso, under the counsel of Anokye. Osei Tutu, after his preparations, ransacked Dankyira suddenly with a large army but was repelled with the help of the Akyem [41]. On the second attempt to pillage Dankyira, the Asante captured Bodu Akefun, the Dankyirahene, and forced other kins of Dankyira to flee across the river Ofe, resulting in the capture of the Note for the Elmina Forts in the hands of the Asante [38].

The defeat of Dankyira began the expansionary policy of Asante as an empire. The victor chieftains of the Asante State rewarded Ɔkɔmfɔ Anokye handsomely for his role. Anokye was given 300 slaves, 100 pereguans, a large gold ring for the arm, made a principal chief with seven horns, one big state umbrella, a big drum, and four hilted gold swords, and appointed as the commandant in the van of the Asante army. Additionally, he received 100 enslaved people and 30 pereguans from Mampon; Kumawuhene, Ɔkyere Brafo gave him 100 enslaved people and 20 pereguans; Oduro Panyin and Nsatefo gave him 100 enslaved people and 20 pereguans each; and Dwabenhene refused to give anything to Anokye. Out of these enslaved people, he found the Agona chiefdom in Asante [24]. The defeat of Dankyira saw the Guan nations, who were provinces of the erstwhile kingdom, transmigrated to establish the states of Alanguire, Assabu, now the Baule people (who were led by Queen Abla Poku), Bettie, Diabe, Moronou, Ndenye, and Sanwi [10].

After the Feyiase War, Anokye admonished Osei Tutu to create new titles—Kuronti, Akwamu, Benkum, Nifa, Ankobea, Twafo, and Adonten, among others [19]<sup>24</sup>. Every territorial division now became organised on similar lines, and a host of minor officer titles were created [5]. The divisional chieftains became the Asahene<sup>25</sup> to Asantehene, with each with his court, courtiers, and war organisations [5]. A new system of personnel was introduced in the principalities, with the Omanhene title copied from the coast. Anokye instituted Adaye and Odwira as yearly festivals for the new state and instructed all chieftains to have an Okyeame, as a chief is unallowed to do most of the talking but only intervenes to correct irregularities or guide the case [5].

Ɔkɔmfɔ Anokye dismissed the chief linguist of Kwaaman and established Safie in his stead and made it a hereditary position; the vassal states within the newly acquired homeland were incorporated into the kingdom due to the proximity, and these principalities became Asante [38]. As a child, Anokye forged a sword for Opoku Ware, grand-nephew of Osei Tutu, from the marriage of Edu Panin, Amakomhene. The forged sword, 'Mpomponu,' became the 'Excalibur'

of Asante. Upon this sword, all chieftains swore the oath of allegiance to the new Asantehene [38]. The defeat of the Tafo chiefdom paved the way for their god, Antoa, to become the nation-state god of Asante as well [42]. The Tafohene was appointed as the carrier of the Golden Stool [5] while the Anum became the aristocrats of Kumasi, from which the Asantehene was elected to ascend the throne and was consulted in all internal affairs [43,44].

Anokye instituted the greatest oath of Asanteman, 'Memeneda.'<sup>26</sup> Anokye also served as the Great Councillor of the Opoku War (1720-1750). With his counsel, Asante evaded Akyem and became crushed, crushing Sefwi while chasing Ebrim Moro, the Sefwihene, who had plundered Asante's capital, Kumasi. The defeat of Sefwi in 1717 gave Asante territories up to the Bia River, known as the Ahafo Region today. The Ahafo territory became the game preserve of Asantehene [38]. By the demise of Anokye, Asante had become an empire stretching from Sehwi states (1701-2), Wassa (1713 and 1726), Aowin (1715-21), Nzima (1715), Anyi states of Ndeye (1715), and Bono State (1723-24) [1,10].

## Conclusion

The Guan are the aborigines of Ghana—i.e., all nation-states of modern Ghana tradition reveal that the Guans are the first to have transmigrated. The Guans can be found in all the regions of Ghana and are largely known today as Akan nation-states. The Guan (the general name for all, including the Kyerepon) began their migration into present-day Ghana in the 11<sup>th</sup> century after the Islamist invasions and initially settled in the northern parts of Ghana and near the Black Volta. However, between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Guan populated and inhabited almost the entire region of Ghana until the Akan of Bono, Akwamu, Ga-Dangme, Mossi, and Wangara invaded their territories. By the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Guan-Kyerepon had established close to half of the kingdoms, according to the Dutch Map of 1629, either through assimilation or as alliances or principalities of the new migrants. The Guan-Kyerepon traded in salt, fish, and pottery and understood the use of charms.

The transmigration of the Ayoko from Akwamu (Asamankese, a town established by Guans and Aduana) to Esumenya Asantemanso to present-day Kumasi resulted in sweeping through the territories of the Guan and making the

24 During Osei Tutu's reign, under the inspiration of Ɔkɔmfɔ Anokye, eleven other stools were created—Asokwa (carriers of the horns), Nkonguasofɔ (in-charge of Asantehene's stool carriers), Mmentia (responsible for the short horns), Baamu (in-charge of the sacred black where all black stools of Asantehene are kept), Abenase (in-charge of Asantehene's clothing, heads the kente weavers and dressing of Asantehene's bed), Prɛmpɛ Drum (these drums were made for Osei Tutu to be beaten ahead of the King's procession), Peki No.2 (a military stool created for the gallant servants of the Asantehene), Ahensan (created for Ansere, a faithful courtier who served Osei Tutu in Dankyira, Akwamu and Kumasi), Apede drums (these drums are attached to the Golden Stool and they are usually beaten whenever the stool is carried shoulder high by the Nkonguasofɔhene, Abrepo and Akropong Stools).

25 Generals and Lieutenant-Generals.

26 After the crushing defeat of the Asante by the Akyem in 1717 leading to the demise of Osei Tutu, Asante state saw a period of civil war and interregnum in Asante which ended in 1720 by the ascension of Opoku Ware as Asantehene. The disaster of the quietus of Osei Tutu commemorated in the establishment of the greatest oath, Memeneda. The name of the place where it occurred was Koromante. Hence, the Memeneda is also referred to as Koromante.

homes of the Guan their newly acquired homeland as they subjected the Guan to the status of provinces. The defeat of Guan was necessitated by the introduction of firearms by the migrants and their desire to establish a permanent home and engage directly in the trans-Atlantic trade, as the Guan nation-states in Asanteman today form integral trading centres. With the defeat of the Domaa by the Ayoko migrants in 1693, the Kwaaman state and its kinsmen began to expand their territorial ambitions by crushing the Guan of Kwabre, Sekyere, Tafo, and Otara Ofinam VII as the Ayoko immigrants waged wars on the Guans from 1690 to 1697. The defeat of the Guan and the exodus of the Domaa from Suntreso provided the Ayoko migrants with a permanent home, the Ashanti Region.

The conquest of these Guan states was made possible by the assistance of another set of Guan, Anum (now Adum and Kumasi Akwamu), and a Kyerepon priest, Ɔkɔmfo Anokye (a native of Awukugua, the head chief of all Kyerepon before 1865). The founder of Asanteman was born through the requested grant of a Guan god, Tutu, hence the name Tutu of the first Asantehene. With the assistance of the Anum people and Anokye, Asante became an empire such that by 1750, Asanteman included the entire present-day Bono, Bono-East, Ahafo, Gonja, Dagomba, Akyem, and Ashanti regions. Between 1670 and 1750, the Guan contributed to five large empires: Akuapem, Aowin, Dankyira, Akwamu, and Asante. Today, the Guan of Asante State are Tafo (owners of Kwaaman), Kwabre, and Sekyere districts. The Guan-Kyerepon contributions to Asante resulted in the institution of the Golden Stool as the symbol of the Asante nation-state; the establishment of the new state, Asante, and its laws, chieftaincy rules, and culture are predominantly attributed to the significant roles of the Guan-Kyerepon people.

### Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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